

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 INR-07 /045 W

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R 051025Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7551

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 11466

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

FOR NEA/INS KUX FROM SCHNEIDER

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, IN

SUBJ: BOEING COMPETITION FOR INDIAN AIRLINES PLANE

PURCHASE

REF: (A) BOMBAY 1980; (B) NEW DELHI 11152; (C) NEW DELHI 9795

1. AS CONGEN BOMBAY HAS POINTED OUT TO US, BOEING HAS SO FAR RECEIVED VERY LITTLE PUBLICITY IN THE INDIAN PRESS REGARDING ITS ATTEMPT TO SELL THE BOEING ADVANCED 737-2A8 (737-200) TO INDIAN AIRLINES. IN CONTRAST, BOEING'S TWO COMPETITORS, BRITISH AIRCRAFT CORPORATION AND FOKKER, HAVE BEEN PICTURED HERE AS THE MAJOR CONTENDERS FOR THIS HIGHLY IMPORTANT ORDER.

2. WE ARE AWARE THAT THE INDIAN PUBLIC HAS LITTLE TO DO WITH A DECISION ON AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT. OUR MAIN CONCERN HAS BEEN THAT WE ARE TECHNICALLY AND FINANCIALLY COMPETITIVE (SEE REF B). INEVITABLY IN A DECISION OF THIS MAGNITUDE THE POLITICAL ASPECT WILL ALSO BE CONSIDERED, AND IN THIS AREA WE DO NOT HAVE ANY PARTICULAR ADVANTAGE.

3. FOR THIS REASON, WE WOULD FEEL BETTER IF MORE PUBLICITY APPEARED IN THE LOCAL MEDIA ABOUT THE BOEING 737. PUBLIC AWARENESS THAT THE BOEING IS A SUPERIOR AIRCRAFT AND IN THE

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RUNNING FOR PROCUREMENT BY INDIAN AIRLINES WOULD LIKELY

HAVE SOME EFFECT ON THE POLITICAL DECISION MAKERS. AFTER BOEING REGIONAL DIRECTOR FITZGERALD RETURNS TO DELHI THIS WEEKEND, WE PLAN TO ENCOURAGE HIM TO TRY TO GET MORE MEDIA PUBLICITY FOR BOEING.

4. THE DOUBTS WE EXPRESSED ABOUT THE EXTENT OF BOEING'S COMMITMENT TO MAKE THIS SALE (SEE REF C) STILL PERSIST HOWEVER. IT JUST SEEMS TO US THAT A COMPANY WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A SALE OF THIS KIND, WITH ALL THE RAMIFICATIONS FOR FUTURE SALES, OUGHT SOMEHOW TO BE MAKING A MUCH GREATER EFFORT. OUR SUGGESTION IS THAT YOU SOUND OUT THE BOEING REP IN WASHINGTON, D.C. AND TRY TO DETERMINE WHAT BOEING'S REAL INTENTIONS ARE HERE. FITZGERALD STRIKES US AS A GOOD TECHNICAL, BUT WE FIND IT DISCONCERTING TO HAVE TO ENCOURAGE GREATER SALES PROMOTION EFFORTS ON A SUPPLIER. WE ALSO WASTE POINTS WITH OUR CONTACTS AND WITH EXIM IF THE SUPPLIER IS NOT, IN FACT, SERIOUS.
SAXBE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DISCLOSURE, AIRCRAFT SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976NEWDE11466
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760302-0039
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760881/aaaactfe.tel
Line Count: 79
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 76 BOMBAY 1980, 76 NEW DELHI 11152, 76 NEW DELHI 9795
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUN 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <06 OCT 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOEING COMPETITION FOR INDIAN AIRLINES PLANE PURCHASE
TAGS: EAIR, IN, US, BOEING, AIR INDIA
To: STATE BOMBAY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006